

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST PATRICK'S RC PRIMARY AND NURSERY
SCHOOL**

Mansfield

LEA area: Nottinghamshire

Unique reference number: 122819

Headteacher: Mrs C Caille

Reporting inspector: Ms Bogusia Matusiak-Varley
19938

Dates of inspection: 9th – 10th December 2002

Inspection number: 248405

Short inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Ling Forest Road Mansfield Nottinghamshire
Postcode:	NG18 3NJ
Telephone number:	01623 478090
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr K Daly
Date of previous inspection:	27 th January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Patrick's Roman Catholic Primary and Nursery School is an average sized school situated in Mansfield, Nottinghamshire. It has 217 pupils on roll, 110 boys and 107 girls, including 21 full-time equivalent children who attend the nursery. The majority of pupils are of white British origin; three pupils are of mixed race, including white Asian, Asian and black Caribbean. These pupils are fluent in English and do not require specialist support. The school serves the parishes of St George's and St Patrick's, but several pupils come from other suburbs of Mansfield. Since the previous inspection numbers have dropped marginally due to other local schools offering pre-school education. Pupils' attainment on entry is average, as are their socio-economic circumstances. Five per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals; this is well below average. There are 9.5 per cent of pupils on the school's special educational needs register; this is also below the national average. The nature and range of pupils' special educational needs are largely connected to learning difficulties. There are no pupils with statements of special educational need. The school has Beacon status for its very good practice in drama, mathematics and its ethos for learning. There has been a very significant turnover of staff in the last year. It is only since September 2002 that staff have worked together as a team under the leadership of a new headteacher and deputy headteacher.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Patrick's Roman Catholic school is a good school with many very good features. It provides a good quality of education for its pupils and it has very good capacity for improvement with the present complement of staff. By the time pupils leave school, standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science, and pupils are very well prepared for their next steps of education. The quality of teaching is very good throughout the school with several examples of excellent practice. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and behave very well throughout the school. The school is well led and managed by the headteacher and the governors. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve standards that are well above average in English, mathematics and science by the time that they leave school and all groups of pupils achieve very well in relation to their attainment on entry.
- The school's ethos values all pupils equally. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning because the quality of teaching is very good and overall provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Provision in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception classes) of learning is good and children get a good start to their education.
- The school is well led and managed by a purposeful headteacher who has a clear sense of educational direction and vision for the school.
- Parents are very pleased with the education that their children receive and are very supportive of the school.

What could be improved

- Further improvements need to be made in order to raise pupils' average standards in information and communication technology (ICT), experimental and investigative science, foundation subjects¹ throughout the school and the challenge for more able children in the Foundation Stage of learning.
- Curriculum planning, in relation to the identification of opportunities for using literacy, numeracy and ICT skills, and the assessments of pupils' progress in foundation subjects, need to be developed further.
- The role of co-ordinators in monitoring standards in their subjects through observing teaching and learning is not sufficiently well developed.
- The presentation of pupils' written work is generally untidy.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

¹ All subjects, apart from the core subjects of English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and religious education.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1998. Since then improvement has been good, but there are still some issues that need to be resolved, such as further improving the satisfactory standards in ICT and developing assessments of pupils' progress and attainment in foundation subjects. Standards in English, mathematics and science have improved and are now well above average by the end of Year 6 and above average by the end of Year 2. Standards in art and design have improved and are now satisfactory by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and for children in the Foundation Stage of learning has improved and is now good. The quality of teaching has improved and is now very good throughout the school. There has been substantial improvement in teaching in the infants and there is no unsatisfactory teaching. Overall the quality of teaching is very good. Standards of presentation of pupils' work have not improved sufficiently and this is an area that still needs to be addressed. The role of senior management has improved and is now good, and all statutory requirements are now met. With the present complement of newly appointed staff the school's capacity for even further improvement is very good.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A*	A*	A	B
Mathematics	A*	A*	A	A
Science	A*	A*	A*	A

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The table above shows the very high profile of academic standards pupils have attained in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6. In 2002, in comparison with all schools, standards at the end of Year 6 were well above average in English and mathematics; in science they were in the top five per cent nationally. In comparison with similar schools, standards were above average in English and were well above average in mathematics and science. Over three years, the performance of pupils in all core subjects exceeded the national average for their age with no difference in attainment between boys and girls. By the end of Year 2, the performance of pupils in comparison with all schools was above average in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' attainment in reading was below the national average but matched this in writing. The school did well in comparison with similar schools in mathematics where it was above the national average. In science, teacher assessments indicate that standards were broadly in line with the national average.

Inspection findings show a slightly different picture of pupils' attainment in Year 2 this year. Standards in reading, writing, speaking and listening, mathematics and science are above the national average and pupils achieve well in relation to their attainment when they start school due to the very good quality of teaching. In ICT, by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are in line with the national average and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. On entry to the Foundation Stage children's attainment is broadly average and, due to the good provision and very good teaching, they make rapid gains in learning and exceed the early learning goals identified for their age in all areas of learning on entry to Year 1. However, higher attaining pupils could be achieving more as, at times, insufficient opportunities are provided for them to record their work even though they have the ability to do so. Pupils with special educational needs make good gains in learning because their individual education plans are consistently referred to in lessons. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve well in relation to their attainment on joining the school. By the end of Year 6 pupils attain standards which are well above average in English, mathematics and science; their achievements are very good. However, there is room for improvement in standards in experimental and investigative science throughout the school as, at present, they are broadly average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils could do better. In all foundation subjects standards are as expected for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, with the exception of art and design in Year 6, where excellent teaching ensures very good standards. Physical education and music were not inspected during the inspection therefore secure judgements cannot be made. The weaknesses in curriculum planning and assessments in foundation subjects result in standards that are only average and they could be higher. The school has recognised this

as an area for development. The school sets challenging targets in literacy and numeracy which are consistently achieved.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils concentrate well and show interest in what they are doing; they hang on their teachers' every word because lessons are interesting.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well. They are courteous, polite and care very well for one another.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are encouraged to be independent and the very good quality of relationships contributes to the very good gains that pupils make in their learning.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Pupils like coming to school and the rate of unauthorised absence is below the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very good	Very good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The quality of teaching is very good. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good and young children learn very quickly because they are very keen to find out about their environment. Teachers throughout the school have secure subject knowledge, create effective learning environments and help pupils to overcome any difficulties that they may have in learning. Pupils adore their teachers and relationships are very good. There were several examples of inspirational teaching in literacy and art and design in Year 6 and numeracy in Year 4. The very good quality of teaching is a contributory factor to the very high standards that pupils attain. Teaching in the Foundation Stage of learning is very good and pupils are given plenty of opportunities to learn by using their senses.

The quality of teaching is better in English, mathematics and science than it is in the other subjects of the curriculum; this is because at present the school is in the process of developing both schemes of work and assessments to ensure that all groups of pupils are even more effectively challenged. The teaching of English and mathematics is very good and, in spite of there not being a whole school approach to rigorous planning of opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in other subjects, individual teachers ensure that pupils are given tasks which consolidate their learning. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are well taught and given good support and achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment. Support staff make a significant contribution to the very good rates of pupils' progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Provision is good in the Foundation Stage. The curriculum is broad, generally balanced and meets statutory requirements. However, the school has not yet fully developed schemes of work in the foundation subjects or identified planned opportunities for pupils to practise and apply their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in all subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The school ensures that these pupils receive the support that they need; they make good progress because of the effective way they are included in the life of the school.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Whilst very few in number, these pupils are well integrated and achieve well in relation to their attainment when they join the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. The Catholic ethos of the school is evident in all aspects of its life and work. Adults set very good examples for their pupils. Pupils are encouraged to be kind, to think of others and to respect each other's views.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school takes good care of its pupils and they learn within a safe and secure environment. The school has good systems in place to track pupils' progress in English and mathematics but these are lacking in other subjects.

Parents are very supportive of the school. They receive good quality information on school events, but reports on pupils' progress in foundation subjects could be more detailed.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. In the short time that the headteacher has been in post she has played a large part in moving the school forward. She has a clear educational vision and is effectively supported by a hard-working staff team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors work hard for their school and have a clear understanding of its strengths and areas for development. They discharge their statutory duties well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school determines its priorities for action well, for example the recent drive to improve standards in writing has been effective.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school has a sound number of teachers and support staff who are deployed well. Resources for learning are satisfactory overall and are put to appropriate use. The governors use the principles of best value appropriately.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children like school and make good progress.• Behaviour is good.• The quality of teaching is good.• Staff are approachable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parents would like more information on their children's progress.• The range of extra-curricular activities is limited.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive comments. Inspectors agree with parents that more information could be provided for them through annual reports on their children's progress, especially in foundation subjects. Inspectors disagree with parents about the limited range of extra-curricular activities as these are judged as satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils achieve standards that are well above average in English, mathematics and science by the time that they leave school and all groups of pupils achieve very well in relation to their attainment on entry.

1. The 2002 national test results show that, in comparison with all schools by the end of Year 6, standards were well above average in English and mathematics and were in the top five per cent nationally in science. The school performs better than many schools in national tests because many more pupils attain the higher levels. The school has maintained its very good results over time and has performed better than most schools in English, mathematics and science. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls. In the 2002 national test at the end of Year 2 the performance of pupils in comparison with all schools was above average in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics. In science, teacher assessments indicate that standards were broadly in line with the national average. The school has maintained these good results over the past three years.
2. Inspection findings show that by the end of Year 2 pupils attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science and achieve well in relation to their attainment when they entered school. Standards in speaking and listening are above average and pupils speak clearly and audibly, using a good range of vocabulary; their achievements are satisfactory overall. Pupils attain average standards in most of the foundation subjects. There has been an improvement in pupils' standards in reading because the school is targeting guided reading and the quality of teaching in Year 1 and Year 2 is very good. This is helping to raise standards.
3. By the end of Year 6 standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average and pupils' achievements are very good in relation to their prior attainment, with the exception of investigative skills in science, where pupils' attainment is broadly average. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards in ICT are in line with those expected for pupils at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, as are pupils' standards in foundation subjects.
4. Pupils in Year 2 read with fluency and expression. Higher attaining pupils are able to describe characters' motives and know how to retrieve information from books. When coming across unknown words, virtually all pupils know how to sound out and blend their letters. By the end of Year 6 standards in English are well above average and pupils' achievements are very good. Year 6 pupils are fluent and avid readers; they read a wide range of both fiction and non-fiction books. When reading Wordsworth's poem, *The Daffodils*, one child gasped with amazement at the thought of a host of ten thousand daffodils. Pupils are encouraged to visualise what they read and this has a positive effect on remembering imagery, which they can describe later in their writing. Pupils have a very good range of vocabulary and speak very clearly and accurately. They listen attentively to one another and are able to say what they think. Throughout the school plenty of opportunities are provided for drama and this helps pupils develop their confidence. Pupils speak very well in front of large audiences and they are able to justify their points of view confidently. For example, in Year 5 in science, pupils were able to explain why bees became attracted to colourful flowers. In many lessons pupils could explain why they arrived at certain conclusions; for example, in Year 6 they were able to explain reasons why they sorted data into decision trees, and made very good gains in developing their skills of investigation and decision making. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils are confident mathematicians. They know which rules of number to apply to solving problems and, in mental and oral sessions, they quickly get the right answer and take great delight in improving on previous best performance by working out calculations with great speed. Year 6 pupils know the properties of shapes, such as quadrilaterals and their lines of symmetry. In Year 6 pupils have very effective skills of estimation because the class teacher provides

plenty of opportunities for open-ended investigations. They know their tables, and they are very confident in applying the four rules of number to solving problems.

5. In science, by the end of Year 2, pupils know what is needed to make a battery on a circuit board light up a bulb and they are developing their skills of prediction well. For example, they are able to explain that predicting is similar to guessing but with more information available. They accurately categorise fruits and vegetables into appropriate groups and they know what food is needed to keep a body healthy. By the end of Year 6 pupils know about the effects of exercise on their body and how any form of substance abuse can be harmful. They know how plants and animals are adapted to the environment. Many pupils can describe how gases are turned into liquids and they understand the difference between reversible and irreversible change.
6. Since the previous inspection standards have improved. Overall all groups of pupils achieve very well in learning in relation to their prior attainment. This is because teachers are experienced and knowledgeable. They are aware of the pupils' stumbling blocks to learning in English and mathematics because of the good use of the information gained from their assessments of pupils' progress in these subjects. Learning is fun and effective learning environments are created in all classrooms, which inspire pupils to want to learn more.

The school's ethos values all pupils equally. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning because the quality of teaching is very good and overall provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

7. The school's mission statement to provide a tangible living, Christian ethos and to promote the overall growth of the child is very well fulfilled in all aspects of school life. Whilst religious education was not inspected during the week of inspection it is evident that this subject is important and contributes very significantly to the ethos of the school. This is achieved by the provision of a broad and generally balanced curriculum, especially in English, mathematics, science, and ICT, and very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is complemented by the very good quality of teaching, which values all pupils' contributions and ensures that they participate fully in lessons. For example, apart from having very secure subject knowledge, teachers also have very good questioning skills that cause all groups of pupils to develop their thinking skills. For example, in an excellent Year 4 mathematics lesson, the teacher taught the pupils how to think creatively when solving problems. When presenting pupils with a range of number operations aimed at solving money and real-life problems, she said, "I would encourage you to try a different range of strategies, there is never just one way of doing things." With this she helped various groups of pupils to use a 'multi-step' method in identifying the most appropriate strategies for problem solving. The support assistant used the same approach with less able pupils and, as a result, they made very good gains in learning.
8. Teachers have a passion for teaching. In an excellent Year 6 art and design lesson, the class teacher demonstrated to his pupils how to create a three-dimensional illusion on a two-dimensional surface by using colour and squaring up techniques. His explanations were crisp, to the point and very informative. He showed pupils exactly what to do and encouraged them to try it out. "Find a starting point for each square and build around it." With this he intervened very well in the group's learning and, as a result, pupils made excellent progress. Pupils' initial anxiety at "getting it right" was transformed into a spiritual moment of insight when they discovered that, by following the teacher's instructions and trusting him, they could produce a detailed and accurate outline of a Greek god. Pupils congratulated one another on their successes with comments such as "Wow, I never knew you were so good at art", and the whole class beamed with success. These moments of success contribute to the very good attitudes, behaviour and personal development of the pupils. Pupils feel safe; they know that their teachers want the very best for them and that they will support them in their undertakings. The classroom rules of "We will try to be positive, caring, kind and conscientious" are evident in all aspects of pupils' learning and contribute to their very good attitudes.

9. Teachers have very good strategies to manage pupils' behaviour. They use time effectively, deploy support staff well and have high expectations of their pupils. This was seen in a Year 2 mathematics lesson where pupils were learning about multiples and times tables. The very good quality of visual aids enabled all pupils to develop their analytical skills; for example, those pupils who struggled with recording numbers shaded in an area of a block graph that showed which way of coming to school was least popular. Average attaining pupils completed a graph and answered questions correctly on the information given; higher attaining pupils designed their own graph and shared this information with their friends. The very good explanations given by the class teacher enabled pupils to understand the multiples of 10 and deduce information from a chart.
10. Teachers teach the skills of literacy and numeracy very well and, as a result, pupils make very good gains in learning. However, these skills are not yet practised and used well enough in other subjects. Homework is used well to support pupils' learning and teachers use the homework diaries as ways of communicating with parents. This has a very positive effect on pupils' learning because any minor barriers to learning can be dealt with quickly and effectively in partnership with parents. Teachers mark pupils' work well. They give informative feedback, which helps the target setting process. Pupils are very clear about what is expected of them and, as a result, they are very keen to learn.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

11. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. Plenty of opportunities are provided for pupils to wonder at God's creation and His infinite love. Pupils use the quiet prayer room regularly and, in acts of collective worship, pupils' individual prayers from the prayer tree are regularly shared with the whole school. Pupils know how to give of themselves to others. Older pupils look after the younger ones. In the dining room, lessons and around the school, pupils behave very well and think of others first before thinking of themselves. They willingly let adults in the dinner queue and offer to help them carry their trays. Pupils visit many places of interest and this fuels their interest in learning. Visits to Newstead Abbey, Padley Chapel, the local church, acts of collective worship taken by the local priest, the participation in school masses, sacraments and visits to places of natural interest all contribute very positively to pupils' spiritual awareness. There are moments of spiritual reflection apparent in lessons when teachers become passionate about their teaching. They love their craft and want to give their best to the pupils in their care.
12. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. All adult members of the school community provide very good examples for the pupils to follow. The school provides an ethos where expectations are that tolerance, respect, care and co-operation will be at the heart of learning, both academically and socially. From an early age pupils learn the essential differences between right and wrong. In consequence, they are sympathetic to one another's differences and the school is a harmonious community, free from tensions of any kind. The excellent use of house points creates a very purposeful sense of team spirit and community, which makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils try hard to do well, not only for themselves, but also for others in the community. The school regards it as a high priority to turn out good young citizens and this aim is behind the success of much that is done in this area. The recent introduction of the 'Get Along Gang' in Year 4, where pupils are taught skills of acceptance and co-operation, is having a positive effect on pupils' social development.
13. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils take part in many drama productions and concerts and become very confident in acting in front of large audiences. Good opportunities are provided through the religious education scheme of work to learn about different cultures, religions and festivals, and the school has recognised the need to develop cultural provision further through more structured opportunities in music and art and design to learn about different cultures.

14. Since the previous inspection the quality of teaching has improved and is now judged as very good. The school has maintained its very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development remain very good. The school is well placed to continue with its Beacon status activities in enabling other schools to develop their practices.

Provision in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception classes) of learning is good and children get a good start to their education.

15. Provision for the youngest children in the school is good overall and there has been good improvement since the previous inspection. Staff have worked very hard at planning good learning opportunities which enable children to develop basic skills of reading and writing and provide them with plenty of opportunities to learn by using their senses. Most of the children exceed the early learning goals in all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1 and they achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. The achievements of above average attaining children are satisfactory overall, but they could be better if more formal opportunities were provided for them to record their work.
16. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and it is based upon very thorough knowledge of the areas of learning and good knowledge of the children and their families, brought about by the detailed assessment and involvement of parents in their children's learning. Teaching plans are detailed, show specific activities clearly and the objectives that are to be taught and, as a result, all children make very good gains in learning. The outside play area is used very well and teachers provide imaginative learning opportunities; for example, in the nursery, children equipped with clip boards rushed around finding Christmas parcels hanging from trees and gleefully ticked off shapes and numbers, delighted that they could match both shapes and numbers. An attractive, colourful, learning environment is created through very well presented displays which show children's experiences in all areas of learning. Good use is made of the resources available and the learning support staff provide good guidance to all children.
17. Relationships between the children and staff are very good and there is a caring and supportive ethos. Children in the Foundation Stage love learning; in the reception class children have plenty of opportunities to have many practical experiences to help them develop their understanding of mathematical vocabulary. The class teacher used very effective questioning skills to develop children's language of making comparisons between two quantities by putting sand in different sized bottles. At the same time, through her use of very precise questioning, she developed pupils' skills of hypothesis and prediction, as a result of which all pupils made very good gains in learning. In communication, language and literacy, when acting out the story of the Nativity, the class teacher modeled correct intonation for the way in which Mary might have spoken to the guardian angel. Children made very good gains in understanding how language can be used effectively to convey meaning. Computers are used well to support pupils' learning and the majority of pupils have good mouse control skills. In the nursery, children observe ice melting and offer very plausible explanations as to why this is happening. Their emerging skills of scientific enquiry are developing very well and they are well prepared in all areas of learning to start work on the National Curriculum when they enter Year 1.
18. Since the previous inspection good improvement has been made in the provision for the children in the Foundation Stage of learning. The quality of teaching is now very good overall and the quality of planning is now good.

The school is well led and managed by a purposeful headteacher who has a clear sense of direction and vision for the school.

19. The newly appointed headteacher has been in post for one term and is settling in well. She has undertaken a detailed audit of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. She has identified the correct priorities for development and, together with the local education authority adviser, she has monitored the quality of teaching and learning well. She has produced effective documentation for the governors to enable them to become even more involved in the life of the school. The leadership and management by the headteacher are good; she has taken decisive action to raise standards and has a clear understanding of the steps she needs to take to improve them further. For example, the school has successfully focused on improving standards in writing, a measure that is already having a positive impact. Most subject co-ordinators are new to the school but they already have a good understanding of

the strengths and areas of development for their subjects. The headteacher has also established a stronger management structure for the school and developed an ethos for shared responsibility so that all feel that they have a role to play in moving the school forward. They work closely with governors so that all share a sense of purpose and responsibility.

20. The management of special educational needs and of the Foundation Stage of learning is good. Both co-ordinators fulfil their duties well. Pupils with special educational needs have clear targets identified on their individual education plans. These are prepared as the result of close collaboration between the class teacher and the co-ordinator, and the school consults closely with external agencies when specialist advice is required. Pupils' progress is closely watched so that appropriate support can be offered as necessary.
21. The governing body provides good support to the headteacher and staff. Through the school's improvement plan, appropriate priorities for development are identified first by the headteacher and senior management team, who bring these before the relevant committees of the governing body. These are properly tested against financial and long-term strategic plans before approval. Although the headteacher has not yet received training for performance management to set priorities for staff development, they are aware of what needs to be done to raise standards and the school makes good progress towards the targets it sets. The chair of governors and members of the finance team have a good understanding of the needs of staff and pupils, offering good support and ensuring that management decisions are closely linked to budgetary considerations and success criteria. Statutory requirements are met and the good monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher is proving to be effective in raising standards. The school has a clear policy for seeking tenders for large items of expenditure and governors have a good understanding of the principles of best value, which are applied effectively. The school makes sound use of new technology for handling and storing information on computer. This is seen, for example, in the way financial and curriculum planning is produced and the good quality of documentation provided for parents.
22. There is a sound number of suitably qualified teachers and learning support assistants in school. The arrangements for inducting new members of staff are good and the newly qualified teacher is effectively supported by her mentor, who is a very effective classroom practitioner. Accommodation is satisfactory overall and the headteacher has identified in her buildings' plan the need to redecorate and refurbish classrooms which, at present, detract from the good quality of pupils' work on display. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is average; when they leave school they are very well prepared for their next steps in education, attaining standards which are well above average in English, mathematics and science. As a result, the school provides good value for money. Since the previous inspection the school has maintained its strong and effective leadership and management and the curriculum is effectively monitored by the headteacher.

Parents are very pleased with the education that their children receive and are very supportive of the school.

23. The previous inspection report identified partnership with parents as satisfactory. Much has been done to improve partnership with parents since the previous inspection and now the partnership with parents is very good. The pre-inspection parents' meeting and return of parental questionnaires clearly demonstrate that most parents are very pleased with the academic standards that their children attain and they think that, in spite of the many recent changes of staff, the school is doing a very good job. Parents are particularly pleased with the 'open-door' policy of the school and the amount of good information that they receive in relation to the work covered in lessons so that they can help their children at home. The use of homework diaries in Key Stage 2 works well and parents are kept informed of any particular problems or successes pupils might encounter in daily lessons. Parents actively support the work of the school and the parents and teachers association makes a valid contribution to developing the school's resources, such as the recent development of story sacks to help

the youngest pupils develop their speaking and listening skills. Parents are very appreciative of the termly meetings that are provided by staff to discuss the pupils' progress. Parents of children new to the school are very well informed of the routines established in the Foundation Stage and are encouraged to stay with their children in lessons for as long as it is necessary. Parents are seen as true partners in their children's learning and this contributes to the very good achievements of all groups of pupils.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Further improvements need to be made in order to raise pupils' average standards in ICT, experimental and investigative science, foundation subjects throughout the school and the challenge for more able children in the Foundation Stage of learning.

24. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards in ICT, experimental and investigative science and foundation subjects are in line with the national average and pupils' achievements are satisfactory in relation to their attainment on entry to the nursery. The school is aware of the need to develop these subjects, but the priority has been raising standards in literacy, numeracy and religious education, which the school has carried out efficiently. The newly appointed ICT co-ordinator is already having a positive impact on raising standards. ICT is being used to support learning in other subjects and pupils are being taught subject specific skills in the computer suite. However, this good practice has not yet had time to have an impact and with time standards are likely to rise. Pupils have a sound understanding of word processing, e-mailing and the use of the Internet, but as yet staff are not formally identifying ICT in planning to support learning across all subjects of the National Curriculum.
25. In experimental and investigative science pupils' achievements at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly in line with the national average and their achievements are satisfactory, but they could be better. For example, there is a lack of a whole school approach to developing pupils' skills of setting up and recording experiments, even though an effective start has been made in the Foundation Stage of learning. Throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, pupils do not build upon the skills previously acquired as at present there is an over-emphasis on the teaching of scientific knowledge as opposed to developing skills. Pupils have very good understanding of all aspects of the science curriculum but would benefit from developing their knowledge of setting up their own experiments and recording their findings in a variety of ways. The school has already recognised the need to develop this aspect of provision.
26. In foundation subjects standards are broadly average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. However, in art and design in Year 6, pupils are recently attaining very high standards due to the excellent quality of teaching. At present all groups of pupils are covering the same work in foundation subjects and, whilst above average attaining pupils produce more written work, all groups of pupils undertake the same tasks. Most of the teachers are new to the school and, whilst they have very good questioning skills and use these well to challenge the different ability groups, insufficient emphasis is placed on ensuring that tasks set match the different ability levels and prior attainment of all groups of pupils. The school has identified this as an area for further development and already the headteacher has identified a skills progression chart developed by the local education authority to be used in planning.
27. In the Foundation Stage of learning, whilst children make very good gains in learning both practically and academically, further opportunities could be introduced for those who are higher attainers to formally record their work and develop their writing skills. Valuable opportunities are missed for these children to write about what they have learnt.

Curriculum planning, in relation to the identification of opportunities for using literacy, numeracy and ICT skills, and the assessments of pupils' progress in foundation subjects, need to be developed further.

28. The curriculum offered to pupils meets statutory requirements and it is broad, balanced, relevant to the needs and interest levels of pupils, but at present the planning for foundation subjects, whilst satisfactory overall, could be better. There is no formal identification of opportunities for pupils to develop their skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT. Assessment procedures, whilst satisfactory overall, are not sufficiently rigorous. This results in teachers planning mostly for the average attaining pupils, and pupils' understanding of what they have learned is measured by the amount of work they produce rather than by presenting pupils of different abilities with rigorously structured tasks that are appropriately matched to their needs. The present complement of staff at this school is very knowledgeable and they use their very good teaching skills to move pupils on in their learning, but the rates of pupils' learning could be much faster if opportunities were provided for them to both consolidate and extend their learning of what they had been taught in literacy, numeracy and ICT in all subjects of the curriculum.

The role of co-ordinators in monitoring standards in their subjects through observing teaching and learning is not sufficiently well developed.

29. Alongside established staff, the school has four new teachers and one supply teacher and they have only been working as a team since September. The headteacher has only been in post for one term and the deputy headteacher has only been in post since September. Already a great deal has been accomplished in bringing about effective teamwork, but as yet subject co-ordinators have not had sufficient opportunities to monitor standards in their subjects through observing teaching and learning. They have undertaken training given by the local education authority in order to familiarise themselves with their roles and they have carried out subject audits. They are now well placed to observe teaching and learning in their subjects, carry out their duties effectively and share examples of best practice with staff.

The presentation of pupils' written work is generally untidy.

30. In spite of achieving high standards by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, the presentation of pupils' written work is generally untidy, especially the work of average and lower attainers. Whilst pupils' work in handwriting books is of good quality, these skills are not transferred into other subjects. Too often, work is not neatly set out, especially in pupils' science books in both infant and junior classes.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

31. In order to raise standards even further, the headteacher, staff and governing body, should consider the following areas for improvement:

Raise standards in ICT, experimental and investigative science and foundation subjects in both the infants and juniors by ensuring that: **24, 25, 26, 27***

- ICT is used appropriately to support pupils' learning;
- the school develops and implements a policy on improving pupils' skills of experimental and investigative science;
- all units of work covered in science have clearly identified opportunities to develop pupils' skills and knowledge of setting up experiments and evaluating their findings;
- rigorous assessment procedures are developed in foundation subjects that clearly identify what pupils know, understand and can do and that this information is used to plan the next steps of learning for all groups of pupils;
- above average attaining children in the Foundation Stage of learning have more opportunities to develop their writing and number skills by formally recording their work.

Curriculum 28*

- schemes of work in all subjects clearly identify opportunities for pupils to develop their skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT;

Leadership and management 29*

- co-ordinators are given opportunities to monitor standards in their subjects, by observing teaching and learning, and share examples of best practice throughout the school with all teaching staff;

Teaching 30*

- teachers help pupils improve the overall quality of their written work by insisting on higher standards of presentation.

* These numbers refer to paragraphs in the main text of the report.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	23
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	3

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	11	4	5	0	0	0
Percentage	13	48	17	22	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents almost four percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	21	197
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	15

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	13	17	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	13
	Girls	16	17	17
	Total	26	26	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (80)	87 (87)	100 (93)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	12	*
	Girls	16	16	15
	Total	26	28	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (90)	93 (87)	80 (87)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

* The table is not complete because the numbers are less than 10.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	19	12	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	18	18
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	28	30	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (96)	97 (100)	97 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	18	18
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	28	30	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (96)	97 (93)	97 (100)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	179		
White – Irish			
White – any other White background			
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean			
Mixed – White and Black African			
Mixed – White and Asian	1		
Mixed – any other mixed background	1		
Asian or Asian British - Indian	1		
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani			
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi			
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background			
Black or Black British – Caribbean			
Black or Black British – African			
Black or Black British – any other Black background			
Chinese			
Any other ethnic group			
No ethnic group recorded			

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.6
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	90

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	30
Number of pupils per FTE adult	20.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4.5

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	508,546
Total expenditure	482,725
Expenditure per pupil	2,145
Balance brought forward from previous year	4,881
Balance carried forward to next year	30,702

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	217
Number of questionnaires returned	72

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	31	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	68	28	0	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	58	38	3	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	53	38	7	1	1
The teaching is good.	67	28	0	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	38	15	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	29	7	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	26	0	0	6
The school works closely with parents.	38	49	10	3	1
The school is well led and managed.	54	35	3	1	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	64	29	1	0	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	46	15	7	11